

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

HEIDI A. BAER,

Plaintiff,

v.

NATIONAL BOARD OF MEDICAL
EXAMINERS,

Defendant.

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) CIVIL ACTION NO. 05-10724-GAO
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AFFIDAVIT OF HEIDI A. BAER

I, Heidi A. Baer, do hereby depose and state as follows:

1. I am the plaintiff in the above-captioned litigation.
2. Throughout my life I have had difficulty rapidly reading and organizing written material. As a result, I have found it extremely difficult to complete timed-examinations.
3. After numerous medical consultations, I have learned that my reading and learning difficulties are the result of severe language-based reading and learning disabilities.
4. Given these reading and learning disorders, I have petitioned the National Board of Medical Examiners ("NBME") on three separate occasions for a reasonable accommodation for my disabilities in the form of additional time within which to complete Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination ("USMLE Step 1" or "Step 1"). Each request for accommodation has been denied.
5. As a result, I have taken the USMLE Step 1 three times without any accommodation, and failed to achieve a passing score.
6. Moreover, my medical school, Drexel University College of Medicine, maintains a "three-strike" policy whereby students failing to achieve a passing score on the USMLE Step 1 within three attempts are generally expelled from medical school. (A true and accurate copy of

Drexel College of Medicine's "Academic Policies and Academic Progress" containing its "three-strike" policy, is attached hereto as *Exhibit A*). In fact, I have had to petition the administration at Drexel for permission to take the Step 1 a fourth time. Drexel has granted my petition given the NBME's continued denial of my accommodation requests on my three previous sittings for the Step 1 exam. Based on a letter sent to me from the Drexel's Associate Dean of Student Affairs, this will be my final opportunity to pass the Step 1 exam. (A true and accurate copy of this letter is attached hereto as *Exhibit B*).

7. Because this is my final opportunity to pass the USMLE Step 1 exam, I have enrolled in an intensive four-month long review course, "CPR for the Boards," offered by Rosalind Franklin Medical School in Chicago, Illinois. This review course is available to individuals who have taken and failed multiple administrations of the USMLE Step 1 exam, and is offered only once a year in two locations throughout the United States. I previously attempted to enroll in this course in January 2004, after I was informed that I had failed to achieve a passing score on the December 19, 2003 USMLE Step 1 exam. Unfortunately, however, the course was already filled and my application was denied. As a result, I waited four months to take a less intensive four-week review course offered in St. Louis, MO to assist me in preparing for the August 13, 2004 administration of the Step 1 exam -- an exam which I subsequently failed.

8. My current review course inundates students such as myself with information commonly tested on the USMLE Step 1 exam, and instructs us on various test-taking strategies. I am in review classes from 8:30 A.M. until 6:30 P.M., five days a week. On weekends, I take practice exams.

9. Given the volume of material covered in the class, the review course administrators have advised us that the review course's impact will be most effective if we schedule our USMLE Step 1 exam within a week to ten days of the course's conclusion. (See the letter from Dr. Gordon L. Pullen, Ph.D., dated April 20, 2005, a true and accurate copy of which is attached hereto as

Exhibit C). After ten days, the effectiveness of the course begins to erode. In other words, the longer I wait to take the Step 1 exam from the conclusion of the course, the less impact it will have on my ability to pass the exam.


10. Because it is possible that this Court will not grant my Motion for a Preliminary and Permanent Injunction ordering the NBME to provide me with a reasonable accommodation, I must arrange to take the exam at a time that will maximize the effects of the review course, so as to increase my chances of passing without an accommodation. Given that the course is due to conclude on April 29, 2005, I have made arrangements to take the USMLE Step 1 Exam on May 5, 2005.

11. Moreover, I have chosen May 5th as my exam date so that I may participate in the internship programs required of third-year medical students at Drexel. Third-year medical students begin their internship rotations on July 4, 2005. Typically, Drexel will allow third-years to begin these internship rotations without having a passing Step 1 score on record. If the student fails, they are removed from their rotations. Notwithstanding this general policy, because I have not yet received a passing score on the Step 1 after three attempts, Drexel will not even allow me to enroll in any of the third-year internship programs. Thus, as of today, I am not scheduled to take any classes or participate in any third-year rotations for the 2005-2006 school year.

12. Because I have already had to petition Drexel to set aside its general "three-strike" policy, I would prefer not to inconvenience the administration any further by waiting until just before the July rotations begin before providing them with a passing score. As such, the sooner I take and pass the USMLE Step 1, the sooner I can enroll in these internship rotations which are necessary for my continued medical education. This assumes, of course, that I achieve a passing score on the Step 1 exam at some point this summer. If I do not, Drexel will expel me from medical school.

13. Given my desire to maximize the effects of the intensive review course that I am currently enrolled in and the need to have a passing Step 1 score reported to Drexel as soon as possible so that I may continue with my third-year of medical school, it is imperative that I take the USMLE Step 1 exam by no later than May 5, 2005.

Signed under the penalties of perjury this ^{20th}~~1~~ day of April, 2005.


Ms. Heidi A. Baer



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College of Medicine

In the Tradition of Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania and Hahnemann Medical College

**STUDENT
HANDBOOK**



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The Grading System

Transcript grades are restricted to Honors (H), Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) and Unsatisfactory (U). An interim, unofficial grade of Marginal Unsatisfactory (MU) indicates a course in which remedial work (repeat examination, other supplemental laboratory or clinical work) is required. *If remedial work is successful, the grade is recorded as Satisfactory and may be no higher than Satisfactory.* If remedial work is not successful, the transcript grade is recorded as Unsatisfactory, and the course (or a course equivalent determined by the department with the approval of the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee) must be repeated. An Incomplete (I) grade is recorded in the formal academic record, only in instances where some exigency prevented a student from completing course requirements. When a student chooses not or is unable to complete the incomplete course within that academic year or within a time frame defined by the department, the course director will submit a grade change from I to W (Withdrawn). A grade change of I to W will be made administratively if a grade of I is not converted to an S or other final grade within that timeframe. If a course with the grade of Unsatisfactory is repeated and passed, the transcript records both the U and the S.

Departments determine grades by objective and subjective measures including examination performance, participation, and faculty assessment of the interpersonal and professional skills essential to the practice of medicine. Each department establishes guidelines for determining grades. Student preparedness to progress through the curriculum is determined by quality of coursework, appropriate department and professional behavior. All courses must be completed and passed for a student to continue to progress in the curriculum. Course grades and faculty comments are used for determining preparedness of the student to progress, for letters of recommendation and for the Dean's Letter of evaluation, a document prepared for applications for residency and later postgraduate positions.

Appealing a Grade or Evaluation (see also Appellate Process)

A student who has concerns or questions about an evaluation or who disagrees with a course grade or evaluation should meet with the course director. Course grades are the jurisdiction of the department. When appropriate, the course director, on behalf of the department, may submit a revised evaluation or addendum to the Office of the Registrar. A revised evaluation or addendum will supersede and replace the original evaluation.

Required Remedial Work for an Unsatisfactory Grade

Based on a student's overall academic performance, the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee determines whether or not a student may remediate a grade of Unsatisfactory. Students must successfully complete remedial work in any courses in which they have received a grade of Marginal Unsatisfactory or Unsatisfactory in order to progress in the curriculum. Permission to repeat a course or do remedial work and the time and manner of accomplishing that remediation are determined by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee. When a student receives a grade of Unsatisfactory or Marginal Unsatisfactory, the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee will review the student's overall academic performance, and continue to monitor that student's progress. An Unsatisfactory grade is permanently entered into the official transcript of the student. (See Grading System, above.) When the student passes a repeat course or otherwise is permitted by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee to satisfy course requirements, grades of both Unsatisfactory and Satisfactory are recorded in the official transcript.

Course Exemptions

A student may be exempted from medical school courses previously taken and passed with a level of performance acceptable to the faculty, if the course was taken within two years of the time the student is scheduled to take that course in medical school. The student must have the approval of the department offering the course. Approved course exemptions are noted on the official transcript as "Exemption." Exemption from a course transfers neither credit nor a grade. Students seeking course exemption must notify the course director not later than the end of the second week of the course. Until a decision is made, students should assume they will not be exempted and should continue to meet all course expectations.

Transfer with Advanced Standing

Withdrawing from a Course

Students withdrawing from a course will have the grade W recorded on the transcript. Under most circumstances, a student who has withdrawn from a course will, if permitted, repeat that course during the following year, and will not be able to satisfy that course requirement by substituting a summer course.

General Department and Guidelines for Attire

Attire

The policy established and approved for students at Drexel University College of Medicine is as follows:

"While in this institution and specifically in patient care areas or health care delivery settings, a student should be dressed professionally in appropriate attire. "Appropriate attire" is determined by societal convention and society's expectation of the medical profession. A student who is engaged in patient contact must keep in mind that members of the professional community are obligated to maintain an acceptable professional standard. Good grooming and personal hygiene are essential for professionals in a health care setting.

Students are to adhere to the dress/appearance standards of their assigned clinical sites. Appearances that may potentially offend

or distract patients should be avoided. Examples of these appearances include but are not limited to:

- Easily visible body piercing (e.g., nose, lip, eyebrow, tongue)
- Unusual hair coloring or style
- Casual clothing (e.g., jeans, shoes that are not intact, revealing or ill-fitting clothing.)
- Unwashed or unkempt appearance
- Word slogans on clothing or accessories other than professional identification (e.g., cause/position buttons)”

Department

As with clothing, it is easier to say what not to do. It is inappropriate to be rude or disrespectful to anyone, or curt with any staff or patients. Everyone is different. Be sensitive to differences. Avoid being condescending to anyone. Except for children, it is generally improper to call patients or their parents by their first names. It is proper to confer respect by use of surname, not first name. Patients notice if doctors care enough to know their names.

A manner of respect for all individuals, recognizing the rights of patients is fundamental to a physician's professional conduct. Arrogance, superiority, rudeness and disdain for the idiosyncrasies that often appear with illness are manifestations of unprofessional and unacceptable behavior. It is a professional obligation to respect the privacy of patients and the confidentiality of their records. Discussion of patients' problems in a public setting (for example, the elevator, the shuttle or the cafeteria) constitutes a serious breach of patient rights.

Attendance

Missed Time in Preclinical Years

Attendance requirements for pre-clinical courses, laboratories and small group sessions are determined by and may differ in each department and in each curriculum track (PIL and IFM). Departments may factor in student attendance in assigning final grades. Students should attend all classes and laboratories except in the case of illness or personal or family emergency.

Missed examinations during Preclinical Years- Students are expected to take all examinations during assigned times. Any student missing an examination must have an excuse approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. A single make up date for examinations will be announced, and students who are unable to take the make up examination at the assigned date will be required to complete the make up examinations during winter break, spring break, and within one week following the completion of classes in the Spring.

Missed Clinical Time

Time away from third year clinical clerkship assignments is not allowed except in the event of illness or emergency. Any absence from clinical clerkships must be documented and approval must be obtained.

If a student must miss a part of a clinical rotation due to illness or other emergency, he or she must inform the clerkship/course director and any other appropriate individuals responsible for his/her education on that clinical rotation. If the absence is due to illness, the department may request written documentation from a physician. The department determines how and when missed clinical time will be made up. If the missed time cannot be made up during the remainder of the rotation, the department may elect to submit a grade of Incomplete until such a time as the student satisfactorily makes up the missed clinical experience. Students may not pursue make-up clinical activities for one course while engaged in another without the clear and written agreement of both course directors.

Absences for Residency Interviews

Time away from fourth-year clinical clerkship assignments for the purpose of interviewing for residencies is permitted under the following conditions:

A maximum of three days absence in any four week rotation is permitted for residency interviewing. The student is responsible for obtaining faculty approval for such absences before they occur.

A course director has the prerogative to assign make up work for any absence from a clinical rotation. Absences without prior notification of the faculty will be considered as unexcused absences, and potentially subject to action of the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee.

Examination Policies and Procedures

Missed Examinations- Preclinical Years

Students are responsible for knowing the examination schedule and for noting any published changes in an examination schedule. If a student misses an examination without the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or his/her designee validating the reason, the course director may assign a grade of zero (0) for that examination. Students in all years of study, who must miss a scheduled examination must have their reasons validated by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, or by that individual's designee.

ONE make up date will be assigned for each scheduled examination. Students who are excused from the initial examination will be required to take the make up examination at that time. In the event that a student is unable to take the make up examination at the scheduled make up date, the examination will be offered during the final week of Winter Break, during Spring Break, or during the first week of the Summer Break, which ever is closest to the original date of the examination. This will be the final offering of the examination, and students who do not take missing examinations at this date will receive a zero (0) for the examination.

As many examinations are cumulative in nature, the student is held responsible for all material tested during examinations, whether the student has taken the initial examination or whether the student will be taking the make up examination at a later date.

Missed Examinations- Clinical Years

All students in the third year are expected to take their final examinations at an assigned site (Pittsburgh or Philadelphia). Exceptions will be granted on rare occasions and only when approved by the Clerkship Director in Philadelphia and only if the request is made by the 2nd week of the clerkship in a 6-week clerkship or by the 7th week of a 12 week clerkship. If the exception is granted, the student must notify Cynthia Rabuck within the time frame noted above. (215-991-8763 or Cynthia.rabuck@drexel.edu)

Valid reasons for missing an examination include:

- Emergencies: personal or family.
- Unplanned emergency travel (usually related to the above).
- Personal illness (requires a physician's note).
- Special categories (includes, for example, childbirth or complications of pregnancy).
- Major family events over which the student has no scheduling control.

Unacceptable reasons to miss a scheduled examination:

- Not feeling prepared for the examination.
- Test anxiety.
- Non-emergency travel reservations at a time conflicting with a scheduled exam or exams, regardless of when they were made.
- Business or other appointment at a time that would conflict with an examination.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs or his/her designee evaluates each student's request on its individual merit. Students in the first two years with approved absences from examinations are responsible to arrange the timing of make-up examinations with the individual course directors. **IFM policy is that exams may not be taken early.**

YEAR 1 AND 2 EXAM RULES

When you start the examination:

- Students are expected to be in place at their test site approximately 10 minutes prior to the start of each examination. Students must have a clear desktop and may NOT have study materials open at this time.
- No additional time will be given to latecomers. If you arrive more than 30 minutes late for an examination, you must report to the Dean of Student Affairs.
- The only questions you may ask during an exam pertain to the physical condition of the exam, such as a missing page, incorrect question numbering, or illegible copy.
- **Issues of content (including possible typographical errors) can be addressed during the examination review session.**
- All Year 1 module exams are timed by multiplying the number of multiple-choice questions by 1.4 minutes and rounding up to the nearest 5 minute interval (e.g., a 92 minute test would be given 95 minutes).
- All Year 2 module exams are timed by multiplying the number of multiple-choice questions by 1.3 minutes and rounding up to the nearest 5 minute interval.
- Laptop computers, PDA's and other graphing calculators and **other programmable computer-like devices are not allowed.** You will be given a calculator to use during certain exams. You must return it after the exam. Cell phones must be turned off during examinations. Headphones and CD players are not allowed in the examination room.
- **Year 1- Upon completing your examination, follow the instructions regarding returning or keeping the exam booklet.**
- **Year 2- The last page of your exam booklet is a blank answer key, which you should use to record your answers. This portion of the exam booklet you may keep, and you should detach it from the booklet.**

When you finish the exam:

- When time is called, **ALL PENCILS MUST BE PUT DOWN IMMEDIATELY.** Failure to do so is a violation of the HONOR CODE. In addition, if you do not comply with this regulation, you will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs. You must write your name and ID number on all sheets and finish filling out your answer key **BEFORE** time is called.
- Upon finishing, you must turn in your answer sheet and exam booklet, unless instructed to keep the exam booklet (Some exams in Year 1 permit the student to keep the exam booklet- Instructions will be noted on the exam booklet). **There are no "KEEP" booklets in Year 2.** You should tear the answer key from the exam booklet if you have not already done so. Not returning an exam booklet is considered an **HONOR CODE VIOLATION**, and non-complying students will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs.
- **You must leave the auditorium and may not remain in the atrium to talk.** Atrium noise is disruptive to students still taking the examination.
- Students completing their examinations within 10 minutes of the official end time for the exam will be required to remain in the examination room until all exams have been completed and collected.

What If:

- **You cannot take the exam at the scheduled time?**
You must first contact the Dean of Student Affairs for permission to take the exam at a later date. No students will be allowed to take a make-up exam without the Dean's permission. IFM policy is that examinations may not be taken early, although exceptions may be made by the Dean of Student Affairs. All make-up exams will be administered on a predetermined date and time by the IFM office (contact Mrs. Books x8140 for Year 1 and Ms. Marcus x 8142 for Year 2). If a student cannot take the exam on the predetermined date, then the make-up exam

MUST be taken during the next student break (Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Break)

- **The score you receive does not seem correct?**

The optical mark scanner to score exams is remarkably accurate. However, if after reviewing your answers during the exam review, or after answers are posted for Year 1, you feel strongly that your score is incorrect, please record the date of the exam, the subjects tested, and keep your answer key. There will be a "Scantron Reconciliation Day" scheduled at year's end. At that time you may make an appointment to review the exam booklet(s) and scantron(s) in question to determine whether a scoring error was made. Information will be forwarded to the class concerning the process and scheduled dates.

Professionalism

The process of medical education includes instruction in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform as competent physicians. While factual information and clinical skills are evaluated by examinations, and observations in the clinical setting, evaluation of behaviors, attitudes and professional development are less systematic and generally based on observed encounters, compliance with assignments, timeliness, and other less structured methods of evaluation.

The professional development of medical students is an essential component of a complete medical school experience. Students and faculty have a responsibility to acknowledge incidents of exceptional professionalism as well as lapses in professionalism. It is important to recognize that in acknowledging such incidents that the actions and not the individual are being observed and noted.

During the first two years of medical school, students participate in many group learning activities and laboratory activities which require work to be conducted as a group. Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all group and laboratory activities. Students will be requested to evaluate members of each group to identify participation, contribution to the learning of the group and acceptance of responsibility within the group. These evaluations will be reviewed by course directors and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and students who receive evaluations indicating the need for education and reinforcement, will be provided with assistance and opportunities for remediation. At the end of the academic year, students will receive an evaluation of Professionalism which will appear on the permanent transcript.

During years three and four, students receive evaluations of professional behavior and performance as part of each clerkship evaluation. These evaluations will be reflected in the Medical School Performance Evaluation ("Dean's Letter"). Students demonstrating a lack of professional behavior will be provided with opportunities for additional education or remediation.

Unprofessional Behavior Citations-

1. If a Citation for Unprofessional Behavior is received by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the student named is contacted and asked to provide information concerning the event. The student will be provided with counseling, referral as needed, and education to prevent subsequent episodes of unprofessional behavior. In the event of an egregious breach of professionalism, the incident may be brought to the Promotions Committee for consideration of sanction or dismissal from medical school.

2. If a student receives a second Citation for Unprofessional Behavior, the Promotions Committee will consider the citations for unprofessional behavior and will decide on an appropriate response to the events identified. The response of the Promotions Committee may include: educational activities, formal sanctions or dismissal from medical school. The receipt of a second citation for unprofessional behavior may be reflected in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (Dean's Letter).

Commendation for Exceptional Professionalism-

1. Forms allowing faculty, staff or fellow students to identify and recognize a student for exceptional professionalism are available for download. Students who receive a commendation for exceptional professionalism are informed by the

Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Exemplary professionalism is identified in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (Dean's Letter)

Professionalism Evaluation Forms have been developed in order to allow faculty, students, and other colleagues to note incidents of exceptional professional conduct as well as lapses in professional conduct. These forms are available for download. [Commendation Form](#) | [Record of Concern about Unprofessional Behavior](#)

When completed, these forms should be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. When a form is received, the student will be notified and if necessary provided with counseling and support. Completed forms will remain a part of the students' dean's file and if necessary, may be incorporated into the Dean's Letter or considered by the Student Promotion Committee for action. Similarly, forms noting exceptional professionalism will be incorporated into the Dean's Letter.

Learning Disability and Special Testing Accommodations

Students requesting accommodation for physical disability, learning disability or testing accommodations, must submit documentation to the Office of Disability Services of Drexel University. The documentation will be reviewed and notification of the accommodations will be provided to the student. The student has the responsibility of informing the Office of Student Affairs which will coordinate accommodations for testing and clinical rotations. The Office of Disability Services is located at 3201 Arch Street, Philadelphia, 215-895-6825. Students may also discuss potential learning concerns with Janet Moore, PsyD, Director of Academic Assessment and Enrichment. Dr. Moore will assist in coordination of Educational Testing through the University Counseling Center located at the Center City Campus. Students may obtain a complete educational and psychometric battery of tests to identify learning difficulties and disabilities through the University Counseling Center.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, students must have...

- Met the Exit Objectives of the College of Medicine as defined by the Educational Coordinating Committee.
- Met all requirements of the curriculum - passing all required preclinical courses, all required third year core clerkships, and all required and elective 4th year courses in the 36-week final year. 4th year students must complete requirements as defined by the clinical pathway they have selected.
- Passed Step 1 of USMLE.
- Passed Step 2 of USMLE.
- Completed the curriculum within seven (7) years of enrollment. (Individual exceptions for dual degree students or special needs are considered. Leaves of absence (LOA's) are included within the seven years. LOA's do not "stop the clock."
- Have taken and passed a clinical skills examination at the end of the third year of the curriculum. Students who demonstrate significant deficiencies in clinical skills will be required to successfully remediate deficiencies in order to graduate.
- Have demonstrated appropriate growth and skills in professionalism

Please note: Receipt of satisfactory grades in all courses does not assure promotion or graduation. Inappropriate behavior and attitudes, insensitivity, intolerance, other unprofessional attributes or consistently marginal performance may result in an assessment by the faculty that the overall performance of the student is insufficient to be granted the M.D. degree.

In order to receive a diploma, students must have...

- Met all financial obligations to Drexel University College of Medicine.
- Completed an exit interview with the Office of University Student Financial Affairs.

Drexel University and the College of Medicine may, at any time, change any provisions, curricular requirements, bylaws, rules, regulations and policies and procedures as may be necessary in the interest of the University, the College of Medicine and its students.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Requests for a leave of absence are made to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Requests may be addressed to the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee at that individual's discretion. Leaves of absence may be initiated for one of several reasons.

Academic - This leave of absence is usually initiated by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee and is intended for students who are experiencing academic difficulty. Students use the leave of absence to undertake activities which may help to remedy their academic difficulty. The year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee recommends the remedial activities.

Medical - This leave of absence is usually initiated by the student and is intended for those students who have a medical or psychosocial problem that needs to be addressed and remedied during time away from school. Students who are granted a medical leave of absence are required to present appropriate medical documentation prior to resuming course work.

Personal - This leave of absence is initiated by the student, and may be granted for a student to meet family or other obligations or for other reasons agreed to by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Administrative - This leave of absence is initiated by the College of Medicine or University administration and is intended for those students who are granted a leave of absence for an administrative reason(s). Examples of reasons for Administrative Leave of Absence include but are not limited to delinquent tuition, incomplete registration, or failure to comply with immunization or other health policy requirements. The student remains on a leave of absence until the administrative issue(s) is resolved. Under extraordinary circumstances, a student may be placed on Administrative Leave of Absence for disciplinary cause and/or to assure the safety and well being of patients.

If a student requests a leave of absence, he/she must submit a written request including the reasons for, the starting date of the leave of absence and probable time of re-entry.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs presents the names of students returning from leaves of absence to the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee. If that committee mandated certain requirements be met for re-entry, documentation that a student has met those requirements must be submitted. If the committee mandated the leave, it must give approval for the student's return.

If the leave was imposed for academic reasons, the student should submit written reports of grades from courses taken, employer's recommendations and any other documentation requested by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee. The student may be required to appear personally before the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee before returning from an academic leave of absence. The student will be notified if he/she is required to appear personally.

If an LOA was mandated for administrative reasons, the student must submit applicable written documentation to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs or designee, documenting that the reasons(s) for the mandated administrative LOA is/are resolved. The student may be asked to meet with one or more of the associate deans before returning from an administrative leave of absence. The student will be notified if he/she must do so. If the leave was imposed for disciplinary reasons or out of concern for patient safety, the Administration and the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee must be assured that the reasons for these concerns no longer exist.

Tuition, Financial Aid, Academic Standing during Leave of Absence, Independent Study, non-standard progress. Tuition, Financial Aid, and loan repayment may be affected by leave of absence or Independent Study. It is important that students understand the implications of these options.

Academic Status	Tuition	Student Fees	Administrative Fees	Financial Aid	Health Insurance
Repeat Course/Clerkship	prorate	yes	yes	qualify	qualify
Leave of Absence					
- Medical	no	no	no	do not qualify	qualify
- Personal	no	no	no	do not qualify	do not qualify
- Administrative	no	no	no	do not qualify	do not qualify

Independent Study

- Step 1 preparation	no	yes	yes	qualify	qualify
- Research/Project	no	yes	no	qualify	qualify
Extended Curriculum	1/2	yes	no	qualify	qualify

Special Testing Procedures**Policy Concerning Research and Extracurricular Activities**

Students in good academic standing are encouraged to participate in research projects and extracurricular and community activities. It is important, however, for students to plan their involvement in research or other extracurricular activities so that they will not jeopardize their academic performance.

Independent Study

Students may request a period of independent study to pursue research, graduate degree studies or to prepare intensively for USMLE examinations. Students wishing to request independent study time should speak with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and prepare a letter to that Associate Dean that defines the period of independent study and provides both the starting date and the anticipated date for resumption of medical studies.

Licensure

Medical licensure requirements are defined by each state. Licensure boards define levels of medical practice and outline penalties. In July 1993, the USMLE Steps 1, 2 and 3 became the only acceptable licensure examinations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Readmission

If a student who has withdrawn or been dropped from the rolls of the College of Medicine wishes to apply for readmission, his/her request must be reviewed by the Student Promotions Committee responsible for jurisdiction over the portion of the curriculum from which the student withdrew or was dropped. The student must provide documentation requested by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee. In order to be considered and to receive credit for courses already taken, the student must be readmitted within two years of withdrawal or having been dropped from the rolls. If more time than two years has passed, students must reapply through the standard admissions committee.

STUDENT PROMOTIONS COMMITTEES

There is a Preclinical Student Promotions Committee for students in the first two years of the curriculum of Drexel University College of Medicine and a Clinical Student Promotions Committee for students in the final two years of the curriculum. The Student Promotions Committees are standing committees of the Faculty. They make decisions about student progress and advise the Dean on matters related to student academic and professional progress. The Student Promotions Committees meet regularly throughout the academic year. These committees are composed of experienced faculty representing the preclinical and clinical departments.

The Student Promotions Committees act on problems referred by faculty members, departments or College of Medicine or University administrators. The committees address both academic deficiencies and breaches of professional and ethical behavior. The committees formulate policy, review student academic progress and make decisions regarding the manner by which a student will repeat all or part of a course, if that is recommended by a department. The committees make decisions that may modify a student's overall progress through the medical school curriculum, up to and including dropping a student from the rolls of the school.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs informs students, in writing, about decisions of the Student Promotions Committees. Repeat course work, re-examination or supplementary remedial work may not be undertaken without the formal approval of the Committee. The outcome of recommended and approved remedial work (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory) is reported to the Office of Student Affairs and to the Department. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs or the course director reports the outcome to the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee. The final grade is reported to the Registrar, when it is deemed that no further

remedial work is needed.

Appellate Process

Academic departments prepare student performance evaluations and assign course grades. The course director of interdisciplinary courses prepares evaluations and assigns grades. The department (or the course director) may recommend remedial work or repeat of all or part of a course.

Students desiring to appeal a grade or evaluation in a course or clerkship, should initiate an appeal within ten (10) working days following the posting or release of grades / evaluations. The procedure for appealing a grade/ evaluation is as follows:

1. The grade will be appealed to the course director.
2. Subsequent Appeal is made to the department chair.

(see also Appealing a Grade or Evaluation)

After the Department Chair has made a final decision on the student's appeal, the student may make a final appeal of the grade to the Vice Dean for Educational and Academic Affairs. After an appeal to the department and to the Vice Dean for Academic and Educational Affairs, the student's performance will be reviewed in the context his his/her entire record by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee.

Students may appeal actions of the Student Promotions Committees to the Student Appeals Committee.

Students may make a final appeal of an action of the Student Appeals Committee to the Dean of the College of Medicine. Students may appeal to the Dean only when they have made all other appeals up to and including an appeal to the Student Appeals Committee.

Student Appeals Committee

This committee consists of members appointed by the Dean of the College of Medicine. It meets, as needed, when and if a student wishes to appeal the decision of the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee.

Disciplinary issues: Steps

1. The year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee reviews available information.
2. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs notifies the student that a disciplinary issue has been brought to the committee.
3. The student is entitled to meet with the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee within ten (10) working days of that notification.
4. The year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee makes a decision regarding disciplinary sanctions, which it reports to the Dean.
5. The student may appeal the decision of a Student Promotions Committee to the Student Appeals Committee.
6. The Student Appeals Committee decision is provided to the student, who may appeal to the Dean of the College of Medicine.

Academic Issues: Guidelines

The year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee reviews the entire record of a student with one or more grades of Marginal Unsatisfactory or Unsatisfactory in order to determine if that student is demonstrating a level of academic performance sufficient to remain in medical school; and if so, to review individual departmental recommendations, especially when a student needs

remediation in multiple courses.

Failure in a single course: The department will present its recommendation for remedial work in writing to the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee and to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. After consideration of the departmental recommendation in the context of the overall performance of the student during the entire academic year, the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee makes a decision regarding permission for the student to undertake the recommended remedial work.

Preclinical years: A student may be permitted to convert a Marginal Unsatisfactory grade to Satisfactory by taking a repeat final examination, if that is recommended by a department and approved by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee. A student has the option, in this situation, to take and pass a departmentally approved remedial summer course or to repeat the course in the next academic year. A student who is permitted to take a re-examination in order to remediate the course, must pass the re-examination. If he/she fails to pass, s/he will be required to repeat the course.

A student who obtains a grade of U in a course, and who is permitted to repeat the course, must perform at a level sufficient to obtain a grade of S in the repeated course in order to remain in medical school. A student receiving a grade of U or MU for a repeated course or for other required remedial activity may be dropped from the rolls. Students who achieve three or more grades of U and/or MU in an academic year, may be dropped from the rolls of the College of Medicine. Students who are required to repeat an academic year will be responsible for tuition and fees proportionate to the course work repeated.

Extended Curriculum: In some circumstances, students may be permitted to carry a course load that is reduced to allow the completion of one academic year over a period of two years. This Extended Curriculum may be requested by the student, or may be recommended by the Administration or the appropriate year Promotions Committee. Extended curriculum is intended to support students who are experiencing personal difficulties or temporary academic difficulty. Extended curriculum is granted by the Promotions Committee, and deadlines for request of Extended Curriculum will be posted. Students who are granted Extended Curriculum are expected to demonstrate Satisfactory performance in the reduced course load. Failure of courses during a period of Extended Curriculum may be considered grounds for dismissal from medical school. While the student is on Extended Curriculum, the student will be responsible for all fees, but tuition will be assessed proportionate to the course work carried.

During Extended Curriculum, students are not permitted to hold leadership positions in student organizations, and are cautioned concerning employment or other outside activities.

Clinical years: - Students must successfully complete all required rotations (Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Surgery, Obstetrics-Gynecology) in order to progress into the 4th academic year of medical school. All third year clerkships require the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Clinical Subject Examination as the final examination in the rotation. Students are required to pass the NBME shelf examination in order to pass the clerkship. Students who have performed acceptable clinical work, but who have received failing examination scores will receive a grade of Marginal Unsatisfactory.

An interim, unofficial grade of **Marginal Unsatisfactory (MU)** indicates a course or clerkship in which remedial work (repeat examination, other supplemental laboratory or clinical work) is required. If remedial work is successful, the grade will be recorded as Satisfactory, and may be no higher than Satisfactory. If the remedial work is not satisfactory, the transcript grade is recorded as Unsatisfactory and the course (or course equivalent determined by the department with the approval of the year appropriate promotions committee) must be repeated. The MU grade must be remediated within the academic year or within a time frame defined by the department that shall not exceed one calendar year. Otherwise, the MU will be will convert to a grade of Unsatisfactory on the transcript.

If a student receives a "Marginal Unsatisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" grade in 3 or more of required third year clerkships, (Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Surgery, Psychiatry) the student will be required to repeat the entire third year curriculum. In the case of persistent marginal or failing academic and/or clinical and professional performance, the Student Promotions Committee may drop the student from the rolls of the school. A student failing the same clerkship twice may be dropped from the rolls of the school.

Students who are required to repeat clinical work will be responsible for tuition and fees proportional to the amount of clinical time repeated.

USMLE Examinations

Students must pass Step 1 of USMLE to progress in the 3rd year of the curriculum.

Students must pass Step 2 of USMLE in order to graduate. Fourth year students must sit for USMLE Step 2 by January 1 of the year they anticipate graduating. Students must pass Step 2 within 1 year of completion of their clinical course work or they will be dropped from the rolls of the Medical College.

Step 1

Scheduling Step 1

Although the vast majority of students will sit for Step 1 prior to the beginning of scheduled clerkships, some students may choose to defer their first clinical block in order to have additional time for preparation. Deferrals for additional study time should be approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students who do not sit for Step 1 prior to the beginning of Block 3 will have their Year 3 schedule nullified. Students must meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs who will assist the student in preparation of a clinical rotation schedule.

Limitation of Number of attempts at Step 1

Students may have **three attempts to pass Step 1 of USMLE**. Students failing to pass in three attempts will be dropped from the rolls of the College of Medicine. Students have the right to appeal to the Clinical Student Promotions Committee for an additional opportunity to pass Step 1.

Upon learning of a USMLE Step 1 failure:-

1. Students on 12 week clinical rotations-

- a. Student will be allowed to complete the 4 week Sub-Block component of the clinical rotation in which they are enrolled (Medicine or Surgery).

2. Students on 6 week clinical rotations

- a. Student will be allowed to complete the 6 week clinical clerkship.

No student will be allowed to continue clinical rotations until he/she has sat for re-examination of Step 1.

Students failing for the first time will receive a letter encouraging them to meet with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and/or academic support persons in the school. They are encouraged to explore study and examination strategies, the possibility of a learning disability, or other reasons for a poor examination performance. They are asked to provide the Associate Dean of Student Affairs with a written description of their preparation plans for their second attempts.

Students who have failed Step 1 a second time are sent a letter outlining the following: Students should meet with an academic support person to discuss a strategy for success and strategies for identifying and addressing factors leading to poor examination performance, including the possible need for evaluation for a learning disability. They should undertake a comprehensive board review course, if recommended by the academic support person. Students are encouraged to seek counseling to deal with the stress of facing their final attempts and/or to identify and deal with issues that might be interfering with focus of study. If possible, students are invited to participate in a support group with other students also facing their third and final attempts. Students must notify the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, in writing, that they have taken the steps outlined above. Students must outline their examination preparation plan and why it will best facilitate their success.

During USMLE Step 1 preparation time away from clinical rotations, students will be placed on Independent Study status.

A student's compliance with the above policies is taken into account by the Clinical Student Promotions Committee members when they are addressing any student appeal for a 4th attempt to pass Step 1 of USMLE.

Step 2

As mandated by the Educational Coordinating Committee, the following students must take Step 2 review course or its equivalent:

1. Students who have had a failure of Step 1 of USMLE
2. Students who have failed two or more NBME subject examinations.
3. Students who have failed either the Surgery or the Medicine NBME subject examination.

Students who have met all other degree requirements but who have not passed USMLE Step 2 in time for graduation will not graduate. They will be placed on Independent Study pending taking and passing the examination. **Diplomas will bear the date that a passing examination score is reported to the school.** Students who have not passed Step 2 of USMLE in time to graduate, but who have obtained residency positions have the responsibility of contacting their residency program directors and notifying them that they will not be graduating and will be unable to begin residency by July of what was to have been their graduating year.

Policy for Progression into the Fourth Year

No student will be permitted to continue to progress in the fourth year unless all third-year requirements have been satisfactorily completed by September 1st of the academic year of their graduation. A Clinical Promotions Committee meeting will be convened in late June to evaluate each member of third year class and recommend progression into the fourth year. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Clinical Promotions Committee, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, or the Vice Dean for Educational and Academic Affairs.

Multiple Failures during the Same or Subsequent Academic Year(s)

Failure of more than one course during the same academic year or in subsequent academic years may result in dismissal or in one of the following actions as determined by the year-appropriate Student Promotions Committee:

1. Requirement to sit for re-examinations, and/or...
2. Requirement to repeat all or part of that year.
3. Requirement to complete the above and to participate in an extended curriculum program.

If any student who is required to repeat one or more courses for academic reasons fails any courses during the academic year of the repeat, such failure will be considered as cause for dismissal. Marginal Unsatisfactory evaluations in more than one course during the period of repeat may also be considered as grounds for dismissal.

No student is permitted more than three (3) academic years to complete the preclinical curriculum and, no more than three (3) academic years to complete the clinical curriculum. Both of these requirements must be met within the seven-year limitation if the student has been on a leave of absence, undertaking independent study or is pursuing a second graduate degree (e.g., M.D./Ph.D. program). The year-appropriate Student Promotions Committees may permit variations in this schedule in response to individual student request or to accommodate special needs.

The student's cumulative record and professional conduct will be an integral part of any discussion on that student.



Drexel University College of Medicine

In the tradition of Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania and Hahnemann Medical College

Office of Student Affairs

October 1, 2004

Heidi Baer, MS-3

Dear Ms. Baer:

The Preclinical Promotions Committee has approved your request to sit for Step 1 of the USMLE for a fourth time. Please be aware that this will be the final attempt. Please keep me informed of your plans for preparation.

Yours truly,

Samuel K. Parrish, Jr., M.D.
Associate Professor of Pediatrics
Associate Dean for Student Affairs

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ROSALIND FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

Chicago Medical School
College of Health Professions
Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine
School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies



April 20, 2005

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Dear Mr. Nicholas:

I am writing on behalf of **Heidi Baer**, who is a student enrolled in the CPR for Boards class here at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. Since January 16, 2005, she has been working extremely hard to prepare for the USMLE, Step 1 licensing exam. We are scheduled to complete the program on April 29, 2005.

Heidi has been doing exceptionally well in the review course. She is an active participant in the course and studies long hours during the evenings and weekends to supplement what we are doing during the regularly scheduled sessions. I mention this because students who attend to their studies in this way have a very high likelihood of success with the exam, contingent on at least one additional factor, usually under their control. We require that the students schedule their exam date for about a week after the program ends (two weeks maximum). Data for the review courses in which I participate is consistent; success rates for students who postpone taking the exam, even for a three to four weeks, decreases significantly.

In my opinion, not only does Heidi deserve the accommodations for which she has applied, but she especially deserves to be able to take the exam when she is at her prime. Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Gordon Pullen", followed by a horizontal line.

Gordon L. Pullen, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean, Educational Affairs
Director, Step 1 Board Review Course